

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the 1st full paragraph on page 2 with the following amended paragraph. Specifically, p. 2, l. 14 is amended to read "is oscillated".

Some of the more common Q-switching methods employed in practical laser system are shown in figures 2a through 2c. The laser cavity includes a gain medium **22** and a pair of mirrors **24** and **26**. As shown in figure 2a, mirror **26** is rotated (spinning motor shaft) so that the laser is oscillated only during the brief interval when mirror **26** is aligned with mirror **24**. As shown in figure 2b, an electrooptic crystal **28** which becomes birefringent under the influence of applied voltage and one or more prisms **30** are placed inside the cavity. The birefringent crystal **28** rotates the polarization of the light energy so that it is coupled out of the cavity by the prism **30**. Electrooptic Q-switching provides fast switching with precise timing and good stability but the repeat rate is relatively slow and the crystal and pulse source are fairly expensive, as the voltage needed to switch one polarization to the other is more than a few hundred volts. As shown in figure 3c, an rf acoustic wave created in the optical material **32** at the Bragg condition diffracts light out of the cavity to lower the Q. Acoustic modulators have a fast repeat rate but are expensive and a slower switch speed as well as limited aperture size.